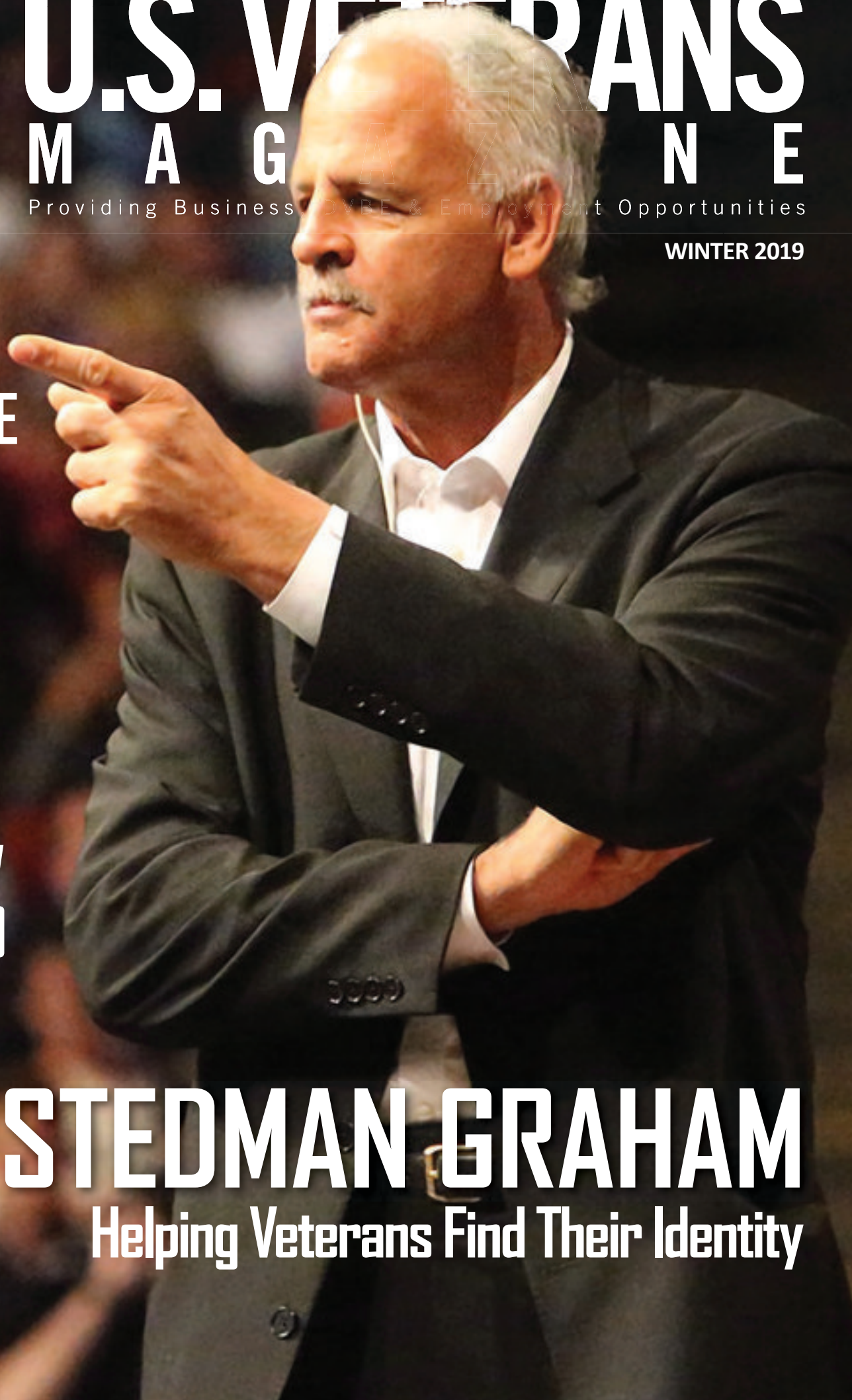




# U.S. VETERANS MAGAZINE

Providing Business, Career & Employment Opportunities

WINTER 2019



**CELEBRATE  
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# STEDMAN GRAHAM

## Helping Veterans Find Their Identity



# One-Man Show Transcends the Life of a Soldier

Douglas Taurel's *American Soldier* moves veterans, families to tears

Douglas Taurel is not an American soldier. He's never been to war.

Yet veterans across the country are saluting him—thanking him for being “their voice,” for telling their stories and for showing the nation what military members go through in times of war and at home.

“I wanted to write something and I was very moved by the stories I was reading in the papers regarding combat veterans with PTSD and not having work. Some particular stories really moved me and started the spark (for the play,)” he said.

For the past five years, Taurel has fine-tuned his one-man show entitled, *The American Soldier*, which spans all of America's significant war conflicts from the Revolutionary War to the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts.

Taurel performs 14 different characters during his 80-minute show, which will be performed following Veteran's Day at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., on November 13<sup>th</sup>.

The characters, which are based upon letters written by real servicemen in each war, include a father in the wake of his soldier son's suicide; a soldier dealing with the loss of his limb; a wife and son dealing with a deployed father's absence; and a grieving mother remembering her son at the Vietnam Memorial Wall.

Taurel said over the course of eight years, he spent hours a day at the New York City public library, reading veteran letters and researching each war for the play—reading 20-30 books and thousands of letters.

“I have a storyline that goes through the play,” Taurel says. “I try to talk about the different aspects of war, the challenges and

what they [soliders] have to go through.

“The overall theme is thanking family members and veterans. The idea is to give the audience a sincere understanding of what it is that we ask our men and women in arms to do for us. That is the goal,” he added.

Audience members, veterans and critics alike are completely enthralled by Taurel's performance and his heartfelt portrayal of soldiers and their families. He's received hundreds of letter and comments regarding the show.

Here are just a few of them below:

“Words cannot express my profound gratitude in being able to experience your amazing performance. As you carried out each story, you truly transcended the audience into the life of a soldier.”

—Mother-in-law of a veteran

“Your performance was first class, moving, thoughtful, compassionate and heartfelt from the very beginning to the end. Tried holding back my tears, but that didn't last long.”

—Desert Storm combat veteran

“Your passion for the stories you enact help us realize what the American soldier does and why they do it. Your inspiring portrayal of our veterans reminds us of the debt we owe our nations defenders.”

—Vietnam veteran

“I saw and felt the pain and journey of each character you created and remembered all of the tragedy I saw as a nurse in Vietnam.”

—Civilian nurse



CREDIT: DOUGLAS TAUREL / THE AMERICAN SOLDIER

Taurel has performed *The American Soldier* more than 8,000 times in 11 different states. His play was one of 100—out of 3,500 entries—nominated for an Amnesty International Award.

But more than awards or reviews, Taurel says the years he spent researching and now portraying military members has given him a whole new appreciation for men and women in uniform.

“What I hope is to share how this allows our veterans to talk about their experiences,” he said. “It honors them and their families in their own words and gives them a voice.”

“Now, as a society, we don't have to make the same kind of commitment or sacrifices that previous generations made. Society functions efficiently even with war. We forget what they go through. My play reminds them.”